

Kayruv



קירוב

“Judaism for Today In a Warm and Caring Environment”

May 2020

Iyar/Sivan 5780

FROM THE RABBI



Dear Friends,

I am grateful to see that our community, small as it is, has adapted itself to the world of meeting through Zoom. We have had pre-Shabbat services and classes, Schmooze and Booze and

other social activities. The community is even doing the rabbinic search over Zoom.

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Kayruv means “Welcoming.”

This is a statement to the power of a Jewish community, the power of small Jewish communities in general and the power of B'nai Israel in particular.

Some of the unsung heroes of this process are the ones who have been making calls to each other, making sure that those from whom we don't hear know that they are a valued piece of our B'nai Israel Torah.

Just as a puzzle missing a piece is never complete, so too it is with the Torah. There is a fairly well known law regarding a *Sefer Torah*: If one letter is missing, the entire scroll is *pasul*, that is, not kosher, and therefore cannot be read from until the mistake is corrected. At a deeper level, each letter represents a Jewish soul – and, if one is missing, we as the Jewish people, are not complete. We are connected to one another, and therefore the sages of *Pirkei Avot* remind us “do not separate yourself from the community”.

One of the ideas behind this very central text is brought by Ovadia Bartenura (Italy 15th century): “That means, share in the troubles of the community. Anyone who separates themselves from the community in times of trouble will not be blessed to see the community's consolation.”

Transitions are difficult times. Not only are we transitioning between rabbis, but also between the realities of meeting face-to-face and meeting solely through the internet and then back.

This is one letter before the last of my 13-year tenure at CBI. I am deeply grateful to every single person, for every single question, for every single moment of great discussion, companionship and even difficulty.

As CBI explores the next chapter of its future, please remember to participate and make yourself seen and heard. Call someone you don't know – most people are home these days. Come to the Zoom services or classes. Come meet the several candidates for clergy leadership and ask good questions.

Above all, remember that at the end of the night, when darkness is strongest, that is when dawn comes. May we all embrace the new times that are coming – the future of CBI's community is yours, too.

Warmly,
Rabbi Nelly Altenburger

RABBI'S OFFICE HOURS

Rabbi Altenburger invites you to meet with her and will be available any day except Thursday and Shabbat. Please feel free to call or stop by.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends

It's me! I'm back again!. It is May Day, May first. This holds a special memory in my life. I will tell you about that in a moment, but first this makes me think about different kinds of memories. Some memories are of specific occasions, events, or life celebrations. It may have been a special graduation, or 50th anniversary celebration of your grandparents, or the birth of your child, or perhaps your grandchild, or the day you became engaged! However, there are other memories which are cumulative. For example, you may not remember a specific Passover seder celebration, but you remember how each year, you gathered with your family, grandparents, aunts, uncles, AND cousins. Perhaps you remember how the women in the family celebrated, versus the way the men in your family did, and what the children did during the seder. It all blends together to give you a special feeling and thoughts of Passover during your current seder. Certainly, this Passover will be remembered by all of us!

Back to May Day. In first grade, my teacher at King Philip Elementary School in West Hartford, CT would make a maypole. It had colorful streams of crepe paper, and we would learn how to do what seemed like intricate maneuvers of the dance. We practiced and practiced, and on May Day, parents were invited to see the big event. My mom and I cherished this memory, and though I don't remember much else from that time period, because we kept this memory alive, I still cherish the feeling of that day!

My wife and I have been thinking about writing down such memories to pass along to our children. I wonder if that is the effect of being home with "more time" on our hands. I would love to know how many of you have been considering doing this. Joel Levitt's book shows that he thought of this, and left this gift for his family!

Now, perhaps you have had enough of this, and don't want to waste another moment reading further. I can understand that. I have stopped giving a codeword for you to let me know if anyone reads this, since I don't see anyone anymore. So, it may be that I am just writing to fulfill my obligation, or perhaps, if something I write touches one person in some way, the effort was worth it! Thus, I will continue, and the choice for you is to continue or not! If you stop here, you may never know what you are missing!

Now here's news! Officially, June is time for our Congregational Meeting! Since that won't be happening in the usual way, the Board will be announcing how this will be accomplished.

Since many of us might be sleeping more these days, do any of you dream of being President of B'nai Israel? It might be more possible than a dream. Let me know if you have had that dream! You may have also wondered how you can help our synagogue through this special time, and think of serving on the Board! So if you are bored, serve on THE BOARD! Let me know if you have this interest.

I have been delighted that two of our members have volunteered to make phone calls to congregants to help us stay connected. I truly thank Nada Adler and Barbara Weisblatt for doing this. I have made my way through round one of calling our congregants and have been delighted with connecting, and chatting with so many. I appreciate the ideas shared, the time spent chatting, and the friendly feelings shared. Know that I will be starting round two and if you have anything special you would like to bring up about our Congregation, and the way forward, jot it down for when I call. You can always email me any thoughts you have also.

Today on "Good Morning America" one of the subjects was people who wanted to help during this crisis and did not know how. The show highlighted "Points Of Light", an organization that can guide you in how to volunteer in a way meaningful to you. Some ideas that were spotlighted were reading good night stories to children, tutoring children over Zoom, or making phone calls to people who would benefit from a chat!

Wow, that is a great segue into my next topic! I had promised to make this spring a time to introduce "Project Pam!" This would be a time when our Hebrew school students and our congregants would volunteer to do "Mitzvah Work" of their choice in honor or memory of someone special. I personally made a commitment to honor Pam and Shalom Lampell who did so much for our congregation. You cannot attend a service on Shabbat or the Holidays without opening a prayer book and seeing how many books were donated by the Lampells to our congregation.

This "Mitzvah Work" can be any project of your choice and any honoree of your choice. Understandably the ways to volunteer might be very different in light of our crisis. It could be volunteering to make masks, helping the Food Pantry, drawing posters of thanks for First Responders, or making phone calls to people who would have little contact with others. It could be raking a lawn for someone who can't, walking dogs at an animal shelter or in any way one could dream of doing something good for others! I had planned to have students choose a volunteer program, plan it, introduce their project to the congregation, and tell how they would enact it over the summer, and finally report how it went after summer! The idea remains the same, but we may have to get creative in the ways we can volunteer now.

Please, adults, and students think of something you can do, and to whom you would like to dedicate your effort. Hopefully, we can share these ideas at some point in the future, and share in the pride of our "congregational family" doing for others. Those who knew Pam and Shalom know they lived by the motto, **"Don't Ask What B'nai Israel Can Do For You, Rather Ask What You Can Do For B'nai Israel!"**

Now let us go on to other topics. We had planned a very special Schmooze and Booze in May featuring a Holocaust survivor, Henry Eisen. There was a beautiful feature not long ago in the News Times, about Henry Eisen. I will find out if we will delay this until we can meet in person, or go ahead with a virtual meeting. Watch for the outcome in our Daily Kayruv.

Speaking of the Daily Kayruv, I have actually heard many nice comments about it, and appreciate it greatly. Cheryl Vanak, our secretary, really puts a lot of effort and caring into making this happen. Someday, I will devote an entire article into telling you how much Cheryl does on behalf of B'nai Israel. She goes way beyond the requirements of her job. I am very grateful to her for helping me through this year. She truly is a gift to us all!

Here is a new idea. Do you have a question you always wanted to ask our Rabbi? Send in your question, and our Daily Kayruv, will try to provide an answer! So send in your question to "ASK THE RABBI", through the email at CBI!

Send in those funny items or any items of interest, or questions to ask the Rabbi to cbi193clap@gmail.com. That is your way to stay connected! We look forward to hearing from you!

One last topic. We have several *B'nai Mitzvah* celebrations scheduled in the coming months. We can't really say how this will unfold yet, as things are changing so rapidly. Stay tuned through our Daily Kayruv, and if you have ideas to share please do.

Finally, our Rabbi Search Committee has been very busy, and we have several candidates who will be the guests at three virtual "Town House Meetings". You will be able to ask each candidate questions. Please think of the questions you would like the candidates to respond to and email them or share them by phone. The head of our search committee is Paul Simon, and **YOU SHOULD SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO DIRECTLY TO HIM AT paul@dpsnow.net**

If you do not have a computer or internet, you will be able to hear the Town Hall by calling a phone number. Those with computer access will be able to "attend" the Zoom Town Hall by clicking the link that will be provided through an email, and the Daily Kayruv!

PLEASE MARK ON YOUR CALENDARS THE DATES FOR THE "MEET THE CANDIDATES" TOWN HOUSE MEETINGS.

**SUNDAY MAY 17, 3:30 P.M.
MONDAY MAY 18, 7:30 P.M.
TUESDAY MAY 19, 7:30 P.M.**

See you there!

As Always,
It's me, until it's not,

Glen Lebetkin 😊

**A Note About
CBI's Food Drive**



Although our food donation program cannot continue during this period. As soon as we are able to come together at the synagogue, we will resume this program.

GRABER FAMILY CELEBRATES PIERCE'S BECOMING A BAR MITZVAH



Keeping with the social distancing guidelines implemented in response to the covid-19 pandemic has necessitated a change in the Graber family plans for the celebration of Pierce's becoming a *bar mitzvah*. At this time, the plan is for the family to meet at the synagogue with Rabbi Altenburger on June 6th.

The B'nai Israel community wishes congratulations and *mazel tov* to parents Ross Graber and Gretchen Kennedy-Graber, brother Isaac, and, of course, to Pierce, the newest adult member of our congregation.

The family hopes to be able to celebrate with the entire community once large gatherings are possible.

ON BEING A JEW

As I've been studying my Haftarah it's made me think about the Jewish concept of *Tikkun Olam*. *Tikkun Olam* is a way that God is trying to get us to help ourselves. Because we live on Earth and God is telling us that we need to help not destroy our home and our all the species on it.

Tikkun Olam means to do something that will not only fix the damage done to the world, but also better the world. For me, it shows that by caring enough to recycle a bottle we can help the world stay clean and if everyone did it, we can all make a positive difference. We can think about our purchases and how they may impact the Earth - we can choose a reusable bottle instead of a one-use plastic bottle. God created us and it is our job to make sure that we don't destroy the world. *Tikkun Olam* is our way of recognizing the importance of thinking beyond ourselves. As long as we do even small things the world will be healthy is what *Tikkun Olam* is talking about.

Let's say that you're walking down the street and you see a man sitting there doing nothing except holding a sign "Homeless need help". What would you do? He might have been evicted because his boss didn't pay him enough or he had a bad accident that caused him to lose his job. We need to think beyond ourselves and ask how could I help? We can't solve every problem, but we as Jews can work to make our world a better place for everyone. That's what being Jewish means to me.

Pierce Graber

MEET PIERCE GRABER

Glen: Hi Pierce. Thank you for doing this interview. A couple of important questions to get started. Are you ready?

Pierce: Yes

Glen: What kind of hair does the ocean have?

Pierce: I don't know.

Glen: Wavy!

Glen: What kind of wave is impossible to swim in?

Pierce: Microwaves?

Glen: As far as I can understand, we're almost related. You are probably wondering how that is. You go to school in Ridgefield. I taught in Ridgefield for 35 years.

Pierce: That's a long time.

Glen: That makes me old and you young. So where did you go to elementary school?

Pierce: I went to Scotland Elementary School and Cherry Lane Elementary School, in Suffern NY.

Glen: Ridgebury Elementary and Scotland Elementary are both in Ridgefield. So that is how you and I are related.

Glen: At Ridgebury there were varying numbers of Jewish teachers, from 4, to sometimes just

me. Were you aware if there were other Jewish classmates, or were you the only one?

Pierce: When I lived in New York there were at least 30 or 40 Jewish kids there. When I moved to CT there definitely weren't as many. There were probably 5 or 6 here.

Glen: How old were you when you moved to CT?

Pierce: I believe I was seven or eight.

Glen: Did you have any friends in your classes who were Jewish?

Pierce: A couple. Some of them were very Jewish or slightly Jewish.

Glen: Did it fall upon you to explain *Chanukah* to your classmates?

Pierce: Yes it did when I moved to Ridgefield.

Glen: On the High Holidays did your classmates express appreciation to you for the "day off"?

Pierce: In elementary school they didn't, but in middle school they did.

Glen: Where were you born?

Pierce: I was born in a hospital in Suffern which was a few blocks from my house.

Glen: What memories do you have from a young age?

Pierce: I have a vague memory going back to when I was 4 or 5 of playing hockey.

Glen: What were some of your earliest interests? And what are your interests now?

Pierce: When I was very young I liked to play outside in the mud and dirt. We had a big back yard. Now we have a yard where you could get ticks...

Glen: How old is your brother in comparison to you?

Pierce: I have a brother who is almost 2 years older than me.

Glen: How do you two get along? I used to fight with my older brother.

Pierce: Most days we just leave each other alone. Sometimes we hang out.

Glen: When is the last time you talked to your brother?

Pierce: A few minutes ago we talked as we unloaded groceries from our mother's car.

Glen: Do you think that your parents were stricter with your brother because he was born first?

Pierce: If I get a bad grade they just wait for my grade to improve. Then I get privileges back. My brother has to wait a month after the grade improves.

Glen: Did your older brother make an impression making things more difficult for you?

Pierce: In Suffern the school was smaller, and teachers remembered my brother when I got to the same class. In Ridgefield the middle school

groups students into teams, and we were not on the same teams.

Glen: What replaced playing in mud as your main interest as you got older?

Pierce: I like playing video games. There is Minecraft, and a bunch of others that I like. We play in our district, not with players around the world. It is a better quality of play.

Glen: Whom do you play the video games with.

Pierce: I play video games with my friends, and my brother plays them with his friends.

Glen: Would you play for sixteen hours a day if you could?

Pierce: Oh yeah, that would be great!!

Glen: Would you be able to stand up and walk after playing that long?

Pierce: I usually can't walk well after 3 or 4 hours of playing.

Glen: Do you eat snacks while playing video games, and what kind of snacks?

Pierce: I define snacks as anything that isn't healthy. Ramen (instant soup with noodles) is definitely my favorite snack.

Glen: Do you have a favorite subject in school?

Pierce: I don't have a favorite, but none are bad.

Glen (pushing harder for a favorite subject): Before the virus, was there a favorite class?

Pierce: My social studies teacher is the nicest guy ever. And he is very funny.

Glen: How is he funny... does he tell stories?

Pierce: He tells stories, and jokes about situations.

Glen: What other class did you like this past year?

Pierce: Science was good, because we didn't have much work.

Glen: Tell me how some of your good friends influence you?

Pierce: That's a hard question. I usually influence them. When I started entering tournaments instead of just playing games, I would try my best to win. I placed in some, but I didn't make that much money. My friends saw that you could make money by playing in tournaments. So they started playing the games I played.

Glen: Do your friends parents' hate you for influencing them to play in more tournaments?

Pierce: Pretty much!

Glen: How about sports? Do you like to play sports?

Pierce: When I don't get hurt!

Glen: Which ones do you like?

Pierce: I like hockey and lacrosse. I don't watch, though. It is more exciting for me to play than to watch the games. I play on teams.

Glen: Is there a lot of traveling to get to the hockey and lacrosse games?

Pierce: Many are local, but some are farther away. The most we go is an hour and a half away.

Glen: Is there some similarity between hockey and lacrosse?

Pierce: Both have goalies who try to prevent players from scoring. And the players have sticks in both games.

Glen: Do the parents in the bleachers behave themselves?

Pierce: The parents of my team members do. Some times the other teams' parents don't behave.

Glen: Another question. What is your favorite movie?

Pierce: I like the Iron Giant. It is about a boy who finds a huge robot in the middle of the woods. The robot had forgotten everything because he had flown down from space and hit his head really hard. There was a giant dent in the middle of his head. He had to hide it from everyone. The boy and the robot were walking along. The robot basically destroyed a bunch of stuff, so that caused a lot of confusion. I don't want to spoil this story by telling you the ending, but it involves secret weapons, an explosion, and something the robot did. And the robot was a good guy, and he was able to put his parts back together! This movie came out in 2012 or 2013.

Glen: Do you have a favorite book?

Pierce: I read it on my Kindle. It is called *To Night Owl from Dogfish*.

Glen: At this stage of your life do you have any idea of what you would like to do for a career?

Pierce: I have no idea.

Glen(chuckling): After your *bar mitzvah* you are grown up. So you have a month to decide! No pressure. Well, Pierce you handled this interview well. So I have a last question for you. Why did the fish stop smoking cigarettes?

Pierce:Why?

Glen: Because she didn't want to get hooked!

Glen Lebetkin



The graphic is a rectangular announcement for ARC's Food Pantry. It features a logo at the top left with the text "ARC" and "ASSOCIATION OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES" below it. The main text reads: "Comida" (ARC's Food Pantry) is increasing distributions. We're now open on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Friday of the month. Please arrive promptly at 10:30am. Hours of operation are limited. ARC is located at 24 Delay Street in Danbury. Below this is a yellow banner with the text: Please spread word of expanded distributions with anyone you know experiencing food insecurity. The bottom section features an image of a plate with a red heart, a fork, and a knife. To the right of the image, it says: FYI: ARC is spending \$1,000 per distribution since March 2020. Funds will become depleted. If you can help, kindly donate via our website Or Drop off some food or Gift Cards on the 2nd, 3rd, or 4th Friday of the month at 10:30am. A yellow button says "click to donate on website". At the bottom, it says "Facebook: Association of Religious Communities".

ARC | 24 Delay Street, Danbury, CT 06810

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Try email marketing for free today!

MAY EVENTS

SHAVUOT ALL NIGHT

In these extreme COVID-19 times, CBI is teaming up with other small congregations to offer a unique opportunity of studying through Zoom during the Festival of Shavuot. Several rabbis and lay leaders will be offering different and varied 40-minute learning sessions.

Please go to:

<https://www.bethisraelsc.org/tikkun-leil-shavuot>

and register for what promises to be a great night of learning.

When? Thursday, May 28th from 7:30 PM – 11:30 PM.

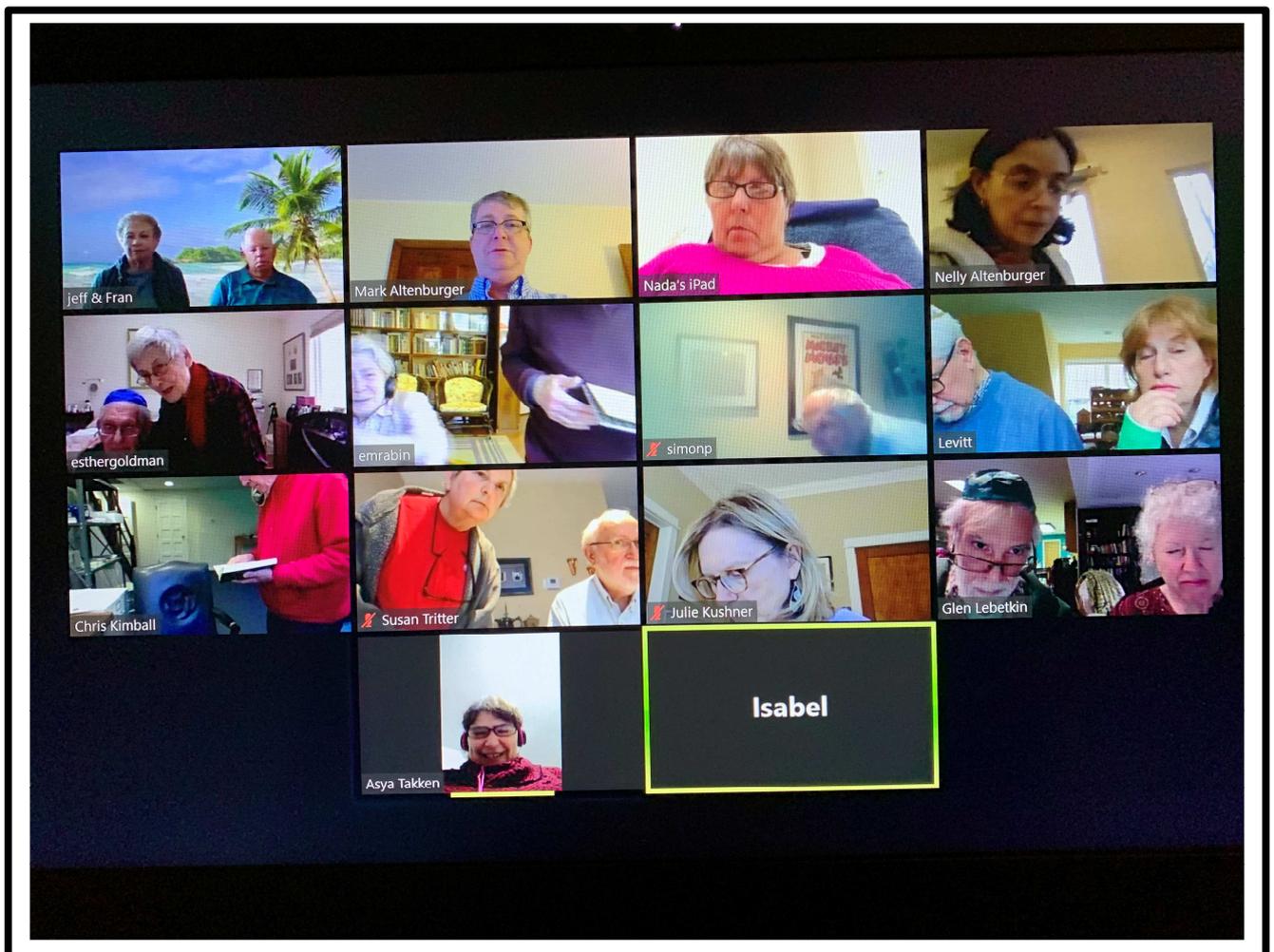
Have your coffee and cheesecake ready for the big night!

GOOD TIMES WE SHARED

PRE-SHABBAT SERVICE

What? You weren't able to attend CBI's first ever "Zoom" shabbat service? Below is a picture of those members who attended.

Picture courtesy of Mark Altenburger



SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

☆ **Shabbat, 15 Iyar, May 9, Emor:** We read of the holiness among the priestly class followed by description of holiness in time: The Jewish Holy Days. *Haftarah: Ezek. 44:15-31*

☆ **Shabbat, 22 Iyar, May 16, B'har-B'hukotai:** The blessings and the curses "If you walk in My ways or not." *Haftarah: Jer. 16:19-17:14*

☆ **Shabbat, 29 Iyar, May 23, Bamidbar:** The camp of Israel organizes itself in the desert. *Haftarah: I Sam.20:18-42*

☆ **Shabbat, 1 Sivan, May 30, Shavuot Day 2, Deut. 14:22-16:17.** *Haftarah: Habakkuk 3:1-19*

☆ **Shabbat, 14 Sivan, June 6, Naso:** The princes of Israel bring their offerings: The laws of the *Nazir* and the *Sotah* are explicated. *Haftarah: Judg. 13:2-25*

☆ **Shabbat, 21 Sivan, June 13, Beha'alotekha:** The lighting of the Menorah each day in the Tabernacle by Aaron and his sons. The Israelites begin their travels and complaints through the desert, and Moses despairs in his burden of leadership. *Haftarah: Zech. 2:14-4:7*

CANDLE LIGHTING

May 8, 2020	8:47 PM
May 15, 2020	7:49 PM
May 22, 2020	7:55 PM
May 28, 2020 <i>Erev Shavuot</i>	8:00 PM
May 29, 2020	8:01 PM
June 5, 2020	8:06 PM
June 12, 2020	8:10 PM
June 13, 2020	9:20 PM

YAHARZEITS

23 Iyar, May 17, 2020

Manny Ashkenas (Nada Adler)

29 Iyar, May 23, 2020

Louis Levitt (Joel Levitt)

6 Sivan, May 29, 2020

Elsie Steinberg (Jeffrey Steinberg)

8 Sivan, May 31, 2020

Haim Victor Maya (Alan Maya)

12 Sivan, June 4, 2020

Golda Haller (Phyllis Cooper)

19 Sivan, June 11, 2020

David Weiner (Jay Weiner)

20 Sivan, June 12, 2020

Dennis Adler (Nada Adler)

21 Sivan, June 13, 2020

Martha Hindin (Allen Hindin)

THANKS! THANKS!

For the General Fund

☆ Dina Markind in memory of her father Max Kruzansky

☆ Lois and Michael Stein in memory of Roz Friedman